

Minutes of the East Greenwich School Committee

Budget Workshop

Thursday, March 2, 2017

Archie R. Cole Middle School Library

100 Cedar Avenue

East Greenwich, RI 02818

Those in attendance were Ms. Carolyn Mark, Chair; Mrs. Mary Ellen Winters, Vice-Chair; Mr. Matt Plain; Mr. Michael Fain; Mr. Jeff Dronzek; Dr. Lori McEwen; and Dr. Yan Sun. Dr. Victor Mercurio, Superintendent; Mrs. Gail Wilcox, Director of Administration; and Mr. Bradley Wilson, Director of Student Services were also in attendance.

6:30 p.m. Budget Workshop

I. Call to Order

Ms. Mark called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. Budget Workshop-Special Education

Mr. Wilson presented the budget for FY2018. He provided a breakdown of students who received services (out of 2500 total students):

327 students with IEPs

238 students on 504 plans

200 students on RTI

***There are a total of 765 students fall under the umbrella of student services**

Half of the proposed FY2018 budget (\$10,304,520) is for salary/benefits. This is a proposed increase of 13.0% over last year. Mr. Wilson reviewed the unbudgeted expenses for FY2017, which total \$800,000. The unbudgeted expenses include new students who moved into the district and needed outplacement, additional supports/services, additional equipment, and additional teachers. There are currently thirteen out of district settings being used at this time. Mr. Wilson discussed the ongoing discussion regarding costs for DCYF placements.

Mr. Wilson discussed revenue, which includes IDEA (\$550,000), Pre-K tuition (\$58,000), and Pre-K grants (\$18,691). Mr. Wilson thanked Jackie DiLorenzo for her work in attaining the Pre-K grants. Medicare reimbursement is \$204,000. Ms. Mark asked what the delta might be if all families participate. Mr. Wilson will research this info for the next meeting. Reimbursement for high cost special education has been increasing. It is projected to total \$207,000 (five times the district's per pupil rate).

Last year the rate was \$143,000 and the previous year was \$109,000.

New budget items and personnel changes for FY2018 were discussed. One full time physical therapist will be hired to replace a contracted worker. A speech pathologist at Eldredge will be

increased from 0.5 FTE to 0.7 FTE.

The Committee discussed ideas and opportunities and how a literacy or numeracy specialist makes financial sense. Mr. Wilson will research how this investment could affect the district. There is only about \$70,000 in “true” discretionary funds in student services. Most of the items listed in this line are not “discretionary,” but needed for programs. Dr. Mercurio and the Committee discussed the need for a curriculum coordinator. Mr. Wilson was asked about building capacity ‘in house,” so the district doesn’t need to purchase services. Mr. Wilson explained the level of training/expertise that comes with some of the outside vendors and how it makes sense at times to use outside expertise.

III. Advisory/Subcommittee Update

- **a. Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)**

Patty Harwood, co-leader of SEAC, highlighted the SEAC meeting that took place on February 1st at Hanaford. Ms. Harwood thanked Mr. Dronzek and high school teachers for attending. Cali Cornell and Felicia Brown, RIDE Office of Multiple Pathways gave a presentation on changes to the R.I. high school diploma system. The regulations go into effect July 2017 and will affect current 8th grade students. Ms. Harwood discussed the reasons for the change and the four main principles (diploma should mean something, be accessible to all, all students should have equitable opportunity to learn, learning should be personalized). All EG students must sit for the PARCC. There are requirements such as minimum of twenty courses (4

English, 4 Math, 3 Science, 3 Social Studies) and six locally determined electives (100 minutes per week). There are three optional council designations: Commissioner's Seal, Pathway Endorsement, and Seal of Bi-literacy.

Ms. Harwood provided updated on the various subcommittees and highlighted the updates provided by Mr. Wilson. The next meeting is scheduled for March 26, 2017.

IV. Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Fain, the Committee voted 7-0 to go out of executive session at 7:49 p.m.

CHRISTINE DIMEGLIO
SECRETARY